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CLERGY
BY LEE COMEGYS

More than 250 religious leaders, including 16 bishops, Tuesday demanded an end to U.S. support for efforts to overthrow the Nicaraguan government.

In an "Open Letter to People of Conscience in the United States," the religious leaders also called for immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Lebanon and Grenada and charged the Reagan administration with carrying out policies "alien to American ideals... and the world community."

Clergy and Laity Concerned, the organization that coordinated the letter, is a national interfaith peace network that claims 25,000 members.

In a written statement, the organization said the letter, with more than 250 signers, is "one of the strongest statements of its kind by mainstream religious leaders."

Signers include representatives of the Roman Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and Moslem faiths, among them seven United Methodist bishops, six Episcopal bishops and three Roman Catholic bishops.

The statement cited "The continuing presence of Marines in Lebanon, the CIA-inspired campaign of terror against Nicaragua, the invasion of Grenada and, at home, questions about the motives and morality of the present administration.

"Any of these events in isolation would be cause for genuine concern; together they reveal an administration obsessed with power and willing to sacrifice human life, international law and the well-being of the planet to achieve its goals."

The Rev. Paul Moore, Episcopal Bishop of New York, the Rev. L. Franklyn Richardson, executive secretary of the National Baptist Convention, and Father Neil Connolly, Roman Catholic Vicar of the South Bronx, were among the speakers at a news conference calling on Reagan to disavow rumors his administration plans an imminent invasion of Nicaragua.